

# New Bernal Journal

June-July 2008 • Vol. 45 • Number 3

SERVING THE BERNAL HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD OF SAN FRANCISCO SINCE 1964

ARCHITECTS OF TOMORROW

## Community Congress 2008!



Tele Unite, Sigmund Ting, and Kimberly Alvarenga on Cortland Avenue to get the word out about BHNC's Congress and Membership

By V. Cooke

On Saturday May 17 residents from all over Bernal Heights, the OMI/ Excelsior, and Bayview/ Hunters Point made their way to the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center for our Annual Community Congress. This year at Congress there were over 100 participants, from BHNC members to clients of the youth and senior programs and Alemany residents. Many city officials also participated including Assemblyman Mark Leno, representatives from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood services and Supervisor Ammiano's office, Captain Denis O'Leary and Sergeant Jim Miller.

Community Congress is BHNC's largest annual community meeting. It is an opportunity for members of BHNC and others interested in BHNC's work to discuss the various issues on which BHNC, its staff, and volunteers are working. Participants have the chance to find out about the campaigns, plug themselves into the ongoing work, and even shape the Center's work over the next year. Members also vote for the candidates for the Board of Directors. Additionally, five break-out groups meet in separate areas and focus on a different issue BHNC and Bernal residents are working on. The break-out groups were:

### Creating Safer Communities

Bernal neighbors and members of the SFPD discussed how to expand the community-driven initiatives to solve issues of crime and safety. They agreed on certain priorities, including organizing block associations for each block in Bernal, and a regular monthly meeting at BHNC to discuss safety and to

In one Saturday and five break-out sessions, more than one hundred participants shape Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center's work for the year to come. Here's how.

hold public officials accountable. Overall, participants were excited about the gains already won by the safety work, and were looking forward to continuing the push to create a safer Bernal Heights for everyone. The next big public safety meeting will be June 19, at 6pm here at BHNC.

For more information or to get involved, please contact V Cooke at 415 206-2104 x 152 or vcooke@bhnc.org.

### Alemany developments

Alemany residents and their South Bernal neighbors met to explore recent development opportunities and their potential impacts on the communities. The South Bernal Action Alliance was concerned about private land owners who want to build new houses on the hill above Alemany as those developments would further segregate Alemany from the rest of the hill. The possibilities of rebuilding Alemany were also discussed. Residents and neighbors both had suggestions for how to rebuild Alemany, including integrating St. Mary's Park and involving Alemany residents every step of the process.

For more information or to get involved, please contact Kim Alvarenga at 415 206-2140 x 149 or kalvarenga@bhnc.org.

### Saving St Luke's Hospital

The largest break-out group addressed the campaign to Save St Luke's hospital. In that group, the director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services, Mike Farrah, identified

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## SUMMER FUN AT EXCELSIOR TEEN CENTER Program Gives Teens Building Blocks for Future

By Danyelle Caruthers

A program for high school students ages 13-18, "Summer Fun at the ETC" is a great opportunity to enhance skills needed for success in high school and life.

We're offering a seven week program for youth to explore topics that will help encourage positive experiences, gain a better understanding of what to expect during and after high school, and learn to apply these ideas in real life situations. Each workshop will be two hours will meet twice a week, and will discuss a different topic ranging from life skills to healthy living. At the end of each week, there will be a fieldtrip, or outing, related to that week's topic, as well as field trips to amusement parks and museums.

Youth will be required to attend six hours per week and may not miss more than 15% of workshop time (4 out of 24 workshops) to complete the program. Starting June 23, the program will finish August 11 with a camping trip and graduation. Youth who complete the program will also receive a \$100 stipend. ■

For a full program schedule or for more information for enrollment please call 415.334.9919 ext. 102 or visit the Excelsior Teen Center, at 4468 Mission Street, San Francisco 94112 to pick up and applications.

For a list of Bernal Rec Center's summer programs, see page 15.

Para ver una lista de los programas de verano del Rec Center de Bernal pro favor refiérase a la página 15.

## NBJ EN ESPAÑOL

## Congreso Comunitario 2008!

Por V. Cooke

El sábado 17 de mayo residentes de Bernal Heights, OMI/Excelsior y Bayview/Hunters point vinieron al Centro Vecindario de Bernal Heights a nuestro Congreso Annual Comunitario. Este año BHNC recibió a más de 100 participantes, incluyendo nuestros miembros, clientes de nuestros programas para Jóvenes y Mayores, y residentes de Alemany. Varios representantes del gobierno de la ciudad tambien participaron, incluyendo a representantes de la Oficina del Alcalde de Servicios Vecindarios y de la oficina del Supervisor Tom Ammiano, el Capitán Denis O'Leary y el Sargento Jim Miller.

El Congreso Comunitario de BHNC es nuestra reunión comunitaria más grande del año. Es una oportunidad para que miembros de BHNC y otros interesados en nuestro trabajo puedan discutir los temas sobre los cuales los empleados y voluntarios de BHNC estan trabajando. Los participantes tienen la oportunidad de informarse e involucrarse en nuestra campañas, y dar forma al trabajo de BHNC durante el próximo año. Nuestros miembros pueden votar para los candidatos de nuestra junta directiva. También hay cinco grupos de discusión, cada uno sobre un tema importante para la comunidad. Este año los grupos discutieron sobre:

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**Bernal Heights  
Neighborhood Center.**

It is dedicated to providing the  
people of Bernal Heights with their  
community's news, ideas, issues,  
and events which support the  
center's mission:

Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center  
works to preserve and enhance  
the ethnic, cultural, and economic  
diversity of Bernal Heights and  
surrounding neighborhoods.

We promote community action to  
build a just and equitable community  
for all. BHNC focuses on the needs  
of people with low and moderate  
incomes.

We work to accomplish our  
mission by:

- Developing affordable housing throughout San Francisco;
- Providing linguistically and culturally responsive services to our community's most vulnerable adults, seniors, youth, and their families;
- Developing leaders; organizing and empowering our tenants, clients, members, and allies to advocate for their needs and for the needs of the community.

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Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With its parallel themes of springtime and renewal, this has been an inspiring Membership Drive. For a 30-year old organization that has lost many of its progenitors and siblings, we must recognize our vitality as a harbinger of hope. That we have retained such an ambitious mission, "to enhance and preserve the ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity of Bernal Heights and surrounding neighborhoods; and to promote community action to build a just and equitable community for all" is unique in the United States.

BHNC came out of the Community Development Corporation (CDC) movement of the 1970s, and while most CDCs were created out of activism to address comprehensive issues related to poverty and disinvestment, nearly all CDCs became so overwhelmed by the risk and management issues associated with real estate development (creating affordable housing was always a lead issue for CDCs) they became subsumed by these issues rather than building capacity for them and retaining their activist, comprehensive missions. For BHNC to retain this original vision, and to have a sustained a membership base of over a thousand people supporting this vision, is truly unique.

Having a vision is one thing. Being able to write about it is a completely different challenge! How many of you have a doctorate? Are still working on one? Can't finish your thesis or worked on it for more than 5 years? Well, take heart, BHNC just completed its thesis and it took a full *three decades*! We call it our Strategic Plan for 2008 – 2013, and it is not only our blueprint for how we will continue to develop as an organization for the next five years, but it represents the culmination of many years

of hard work, listening, learning, and thought. Our Strategic Plan clarifies how we will develop sustained leadership throughout the community, how this leadership relates to the leadership of BHNC as an organization, and puts all our programs—creating affordable housing, serving youth and seniors, and our issue-based advocacy—into a comprehensive framework to ensure that all our activities work toward meeting our mission.

We presented our self-published thesis at our Annual Community Congress, the only remaining Community Congress thirty years after the enactment of a dream of Community Congresses throughout San Francisco which would culminate in a City-wide Congress for community based issues to rise with the aid of community based leaders into a confluence of leadership and action items for our City's leaders. If you were not able to join us for this year's Community Congress, and you want to receive a copy of our Strategic Plan—even better yet, if you want to sit down to discuss its contents—please let me know.

In the meantime, please take some time to read through this issue of the NBJ. As we head toward summer, our membership will continue to build, and we will be continuing our ambitious work for comprehensive, multi-cultural community building. Please save these following dates on your calendars: **August 16** for the Hillwide Garage Sale, **October 4** will be our 30th Anniversary Celebration, culminating on **October 19** at Fiesta on this Hill. Some of these topics—and many, many others—are contained within these pages, so enjoy and happy reading!

—Joseph Smooke

*Executive Director, Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center*



Joseph Smooke (left) at 2008 Congress

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### KEEP THE LIBRARY MURAL!

Dear Editor:

I am writing in regards to Andre Rothblatt's letter in the April/May 2008 edition of NBJ proposing that the mural on the Bernal library not be restored. Although the mural may not have been part of the original facade in 1939, its addition is meaningful and I object to his reasoning: "It doesn't cover the entire facade or wall as other murals in the neighborhood. The content of the mural does not reflect the use of the building, as it does not promote books or reading." I also object to his description of the mural; "The composition gives the feeling of a decal applied to the surface."

First of all, as an artist and avid librarygoer, I think it is short sighted to view the mural as not representing the library as it "does not promote books or reading." The mural reflects human subjects, the imagination, and the community, all related to learning (and certainly to the library). It sounds like he will only be satisfied with a mural that shows illustrations of books and people reading. That's one way conception, but not a very creative one in my opinion.

The fact is, the mural *does* exist and it is part of the library, and many of us enjoy it and the visual and imaginative message it portrays as well as the feeling of community it sends. Without it I think the library will look sterile, and Bernal residents will miss it. It's like gentrification to wipe it out. Bernal Heights is well known for keeping its non-commercial, non-homogenized neighborhood feel.

Also, the fact that he sees it as a "decal applied to the surface" is his opinion, but I would argue merely that it is faded and needs restoration—like the rest of the library—to do it justice.

I have no idea what he means or why it is relevant when he states; "The current mural is not as extensive as other

murals in the neighborhood." What does this have to do with keeping it or not, and what other murals is he referring to that are more "extensive" and therefore, presumably of more value?

Mr. Rothblatt may be an architect, but unfortunately he seems to lack artistic insight. To me that is very sad indeed, and even more of a reason to keep the mural; so that people will see it and think about art and community. I hope that the Bernal community gets a vote in this matter because I think it will be very sad to see the mural go. With it, an important part of history and a message to the neighborhood will also go.

I realize it will cost more more financially to restore it, but as an art piece in our neighborhood isn't it worth it? (And maybe there is a way to raise money for this.) Bottom line, it's already on the library, is part of the library, and, for that reason, deserves to stay.

—Tivela Seeche

### PRESERVE THE BERNAL LIBRARY MURAL & HISTORY

Dear Editor:

I was party to a meeting in November of 2007 with representatives from the Library Commission, administration, Friends of the Library, as well as members of the Bernal Heights community. City Librarian Luis Herrera was interested in hearing feedback on whether to preserve the Bernal Library mural or remove it. Although the room divided on the preservation of the mural, we were promised the community would be kept apprised and allowed larger feedback into the commission's process and final decision. Since the renovation has started, I'm still waiting with anxiety and I haven't heard back from Mr. Herrera.

The Library mural is a reflection of the historic and recent past of Bernal

Heights, produced by Bernal muralists Arch Williams and Carlos Alcala in 1982 with the help of the Mural Arts Center. The production involved at least twenty-four Bernal residents in the design and

**"The fact is, the Mural  
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think the library would  
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residents will miss it."**

installation, and many others supported the process. A large number of these residents and/or their families still reside in our community. Carlos' son, for example, is now a recognized muralist in San Francisco and the family home is still on Porter. A list of the participants can be found on the east side of the library close to Cortland Avenue.

I was reading the names the other day. The first name on the list of participants is Walter Alvarez. Walter's family own two homes on Banks Street across from Paul Revere elementary. He attended Paul Revere as did his aunts, uncle, brothers and sisters, as well as cousins. I was the best man at his aunt's wedding in the 1980s, and Gus Gutierrez, her husband, was also my best man when I got married in 1981. Gus was run over by a speeding automobile on Cortland Avenue in the 1980s. This was a tragic loss to many of us and we mourned collectively. Many of the other participants on that list have similar successes and tragedies as their families grew up in Bernal. I know it gives Walter pride to see his

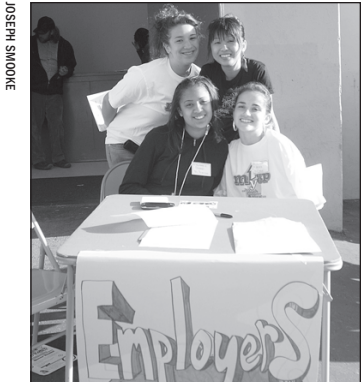
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BHNC PROGRAMS

YOUTH

Springing into the BHNC Job Fair



Teens plan for summer (left); Job Fair organizers smile for the camera (above)

By Tina Nguyen

For those who missed the Youth Employment Services Job Fair at the Bernal Heights Recreation Center on April 10, the evening was filled with nothing but positive energy: youth, families, community based organizations and residents came to the recreation center for hot dogs and employment opportunities, while popular radio station 94.9 kept the music going.

Not only did 94.9 maintain the mood of the fair, they also offered youth internships to work at the radio station. Meanwhile, over twenty employers and organizations such as Juma Ventures, Project Pull, Walgreens, and the San Francisco Airport came to offer opportunities to youth making summer work plans. Ap-

proximately 150 youth from June Jordan High School, Philip Burton, Balboa, and John O’Connell, as well as referrals from agencies around the city, came to the fair for career resources.

The employers and staff supported the fair, but the biggest support came from the MYEEP and NDEP youth workers who made sure the fair ran smoothly—creating signs, setting up the gym, and helping clean up afterward. It’s safe to say the fair couldn’t have been as successful without the youth workers.

A special thanks to: Safeway, Trader Joes, participating organizations and employers, KYLD 94.9, Bernal Heights Recreation Center and all the MYEEP/NDEP youth workers! ■

continued from page 2

name, and the names of old friends, recognized for their contribution to the community, to their home.

The mural itself has Latin American and Aztec themes. People of Latino and Indian descent as well as the pyramids are all reflected on the front of the library. A message of Peace is very clearly communicated in English and Spanish—a message both historic and current, Bernal has a history of antiwar protest and migration running from World War II to the current protests of Iraq War taking place on Cortland and Andover on Fridays. There also is a war on the streets of San Francisco with our youngsters killing other youth and their families. I can’t think of a more pertinent message for our community than Peace—perhaps education and respect, which I think the mural also depicts by its art and location.

The east side and backside also reflects the era of Peace, and the low riders which still exist today. As recently as the April 19 Cesar Chavez parade, low riders drove some of our politicians and community leaders through the parade proceedings, up 24th Street and down Mission street The mural also depicts African American and Native American imagery, our evicted Preschool, the old Arrow Pharmacy and our beloved Neighborhood Center.

Bernal Heights is named after Don Jose Cornelio Bernal, a Mexican land baron who owned it until the mid 1800’s. To this day many Latino families still reside in the community and contribute to the fabric and diversity of our community, comprising 54% of the residents on the south side of Cortland.

I believe we should honor this rich history of diversity and an era of Peace, our youth of color, and their recognition of culture. I’m one for preserving the Bernal Library mural.

—Mauricio Vela

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BHNC PROGRAMS  
YOUTH

Donors Adventurously Mix  
Baseball, BHNC

By Jeff Lester

While many of us live our lives discreetly, partitioning our passions into separate and distinct areas, there are others who, with full abandon, meld together the objects of their affection into new and startling shapes. Take, for example, the two donors who provide BHNC with San Francisco Giants tickets. By combining their love of the game with their fondness for their local community center, these daring (albeit anonymous) individuals donate spans of spectacular hours at PacBell Park to BHNC volunteers, Bernal youth, and even beleaguered BHNC program directors. (Hey, even community leaders need to spend some time outdoors yelling at Barry Zito.)

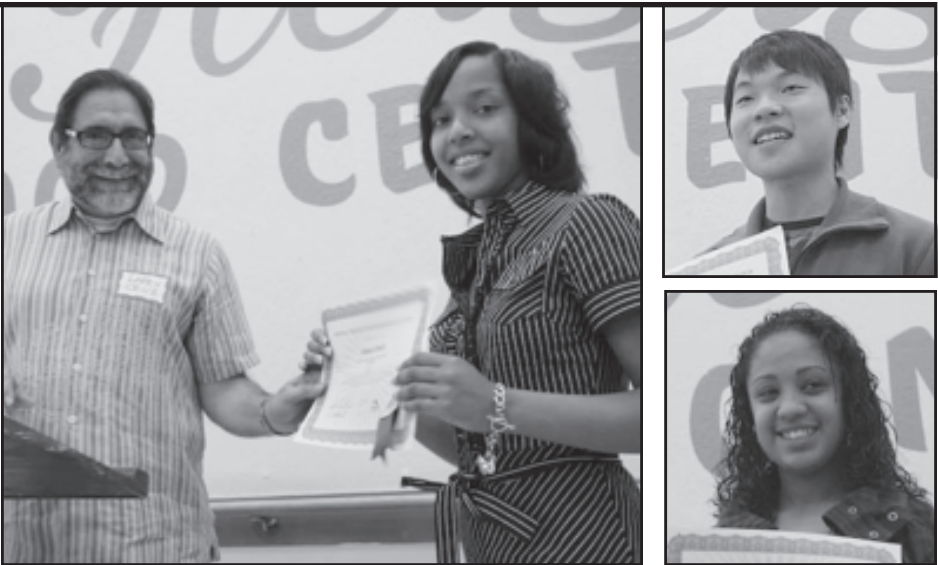
Recently, one of these donors discussed her motivation. “I’ve lived on the hill 29 years,” she disclosed by phone one bright spring afternoon. “And I’m not what you would call a political person. I donate, I’m a financial donor. Home Depot was my big issue—I’ve always been opposed to big box shops, and I really worked hard against Home Depot—and

that’s about the extent of it. But a few years ago, instead of donating my spare season tickets to CATS (the Community Access Ticket Service run by the San Francisco Giants), I thought, my goodness, we’ve got an excellent center right here in Bernal and I can do something to help out my community.”

“I’ve had season tickets since they opened the park in 2000. I went to a lot of games earlier on, but now when I find myself unable to go, I’ll give them to the community center.”

When asked if she minds that her donation may lead to such potentially dangerous behaviors among staff such as enjoyment and/or relaxation, the donor laughed. “The tickets are for anybody and everybody. Whatever’s best for the Center, that’s the way they should use ’em.”

Katixa Aboitiz, Fund Development Manager for BHNC, affirmed the benefits of the anonymous donor’s gift. “We’ve used [the tickets] to give kids in the neighborhood a chance to take in games. We’ve given tickets as prizes, or rewards to volunteers, and had seniors attend. It’s a really great gift.” ■



Larry Cruz with Bernard Education Program winner Jaleace Smith (above); Willy Wong (top); and Chanel Moody (bottom)

BEP Recipients Eye Academic  
Careers

By Tina Nguyen

This year’s Bernard Education Program (BEP) has selected three recipients who have demonstrated leadership and community involvement while being a participant at the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center: actively involved in MYEEP, New Directions Employment Program (NDEP) and the YES programs, each of these youth have displayed a willingness to be positive role models in the community.

Jaleace Smith, a participant in the NDEP program since 2007, has been keeping busy to reach her goals. Not only is she interning at the Mayors Office of Neighborhood Services, she is also currently a first year City College student with an emphasis in child development in the hopes of becoming a social worker. To build on her child development experience she also went through the YES program to seek employment at a childcare center. Nailing the interview at the Jewish Community Center, Smith has retained her job at the childcare center for over three months. “Jaleace is a pleasure to work with and I hear nothing but good feedback from her manager at the JCC. She is hard working, bright and has the drive to reach her goals in no time!” said youth director Frederique Clermont. Smith will be transitioning from the NDEP program by this summer, and plans to con-

tinue working at the Child Care Center while focusing on her education.

Willy Wong has participated in the MYEEP program for the last two years and benefited from the program tremendously. An immigrant from Brazil, Wong found MYEEP helped him both socially and with learning English as a second language. Wong has been accepted to both schools he applied to—UC Davis and City College of San Francisco—but decided to attend CCSF for the first two years while majoring in Business. The grant will help him start college in the Fall of 2008.

An active participant of MYEEP for the last two years, Chanel Moody is now a Counselor in Training (CIT). Moody has shown leadership skills through MYEEP by assisting with leading workshops and being involved in community events like the Spring 2008 Job Fair. Currently she will be graduating from high school and preparing to go to San Jose State University in the Fall of 2008. She plans to major in social justice.

Formed in 2006, the Bernard Education Program is named in honor of BHNC donor David Bernard and allows recipients to further their educational goals. ■

For info about applying to the Bernard Education Program, please contact Frederique Clermont at fclermont@bhnc.org

RESERVE LA FECHA

**BHNC Cumple 30 y lo vamos a festejar con una fiesta de cumpleaños el 4 de octubre en el Rec Center!**

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June 9

June 13

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June 16

June 23

June 24

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BHNC PROGRAMS

HOUSING

BATTLE FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW:

Affordable Housing Charter Amendment on Upcoming Ballot

By Kevin Kitchingham

This November, San Francisco voters have the opportunity to make good on previous attempts to preserve and enhance the economic diversity of the City by passing the Affordable Housing Charter Amendment and companion revenue measure, co-sponsored by Supervisors Chris Daly, Tom Ammiano, and Ross Mirkarimi. With mounting economic pressures bearing down on families, the elderly, and the poor, there is desperate need to provide affordable housing opportunities to this spectrum of income earners statistics show are fleeing San Francisco at alarming rates.

The Affordable Housing Charter Amendment intends to establish a funding stream which sets aside 2.5 cents for

Unlike recent attempts where voters were asked to approve bond measures, the Charter Amendment requires a simple majority.

every \$100 of assessed property tax the City receives, generating more than \$33 million annually over the next fifteen years. Affordable housing developers can leverage/match that with State and Federal funding sources at a rate of roughly three to one, turning that \$33 million into \$100 million a year, and bringing to the City almost \$1.5 billion in funds dedicated to affordable housing over the next 15 years.

“We need concrete steps and goals to solve the housing crisis,” says Julian Davis, Executive Director of Tenderloin Economic Development Project. “Institutionalizing mechanisms, and creating a sustainable pool of funds is a huge step toward the City’s stated policy goal for 64% of all new units to be affordable.” One such ‘concrete step’ detailed in the legislation promotes home ownership programs such as first-time homebuyer assistance for households that earn no more than eighty percent (80%) of San Francisco Median Income. Another ensures that 50% of new affordable units are two or more bedrooms, a unit type

conductive to the needs of families.

Not only will the set-aside provide access to capital for acquiring and developing affordable units, it will also fund a range of benefits to low-income San Franciscans, including tenant counseling, legal services, eviction prevention services, and rent subsidies. These funds will also create thousand of affordable units, helping to offset the ongoing real estate development pressures in San Francisco which continue to force out working class families, the poor, and the elderly, pressures contributing to the rapid gentrification and the cultural demise of the City.

Having learned the lessons of past elections, the legislation’s supporters and the affordable housing community are trying a strategy similar to past successes like the Library Preservation Fund or the Park Recreation and Open Space Fund. “Unlike recent attempts where voters were asked to approve bond measures, which require two-thirds majority, the Charter Amendment requires a simple majority (50% +1),” says Calvin Welch, Council of Community Housing Organizations. The last two housing bond measures both won by considerable margins but not by the high hurdle of two-thirds. Clearly the voters of San Francisco want more affordable housing, and the Affordable Housing Charter Amendment slated for November 2008 gives voters the opportunity for the brighter tomorrow they’ve supported in recent elections. “Over the last few years the funding for affordable housing has become a political football kicked around by the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors,” adds Welch. “The San Francisco Housing Fund Charter Amendment will end all that by mandating meaningful public participation in the development and approval of the City’s affordable housing budget. For anyone interested in good public policy and simple fairness, this alone is a compelling reason to vote for the measure.” ■

For more information, please contact Kevin Kitchingham at [kkitchingham@bhnc.org](mailto:kkitchingham@bhnc.org)

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BHNC Purchases Excelsior Teen Center

By Faith Kirkpatrick and Danyelle Caruthers

For the past five years, BHNC’s Excelsior Teen Center (ETC), located on 4468 Mission Street at Excelsior Avenue has been home to many of our Youth Services Programs. At the end of 2007, the building was put up for sale. Because our lease was up at the end of February this year, this sale put at risk all the important programming within the ETC. BHNC, through its Housing Services Affiliate (HSA), was opportunely poised to put in a purchase offer on the property. Initially outbid, BHNC was invited to submit a new offer when negotiations with the other party fell through and we jumped at the renewed chance to become owners of the building and save the ETC. And so it is with much pride that we announce that as of April 18, HSA is the owner of the ETC building!

We couldn’t have done it without the skillful work of our agent, Kenneth Collins, and the support of the Northern California Community Loan Fund (NCCLF). NCCLF has provided the initial acquisition loan but the rest of the financial support will come from a variety of sources—preliminarily the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, the S.H. Cowell Foundation, San Francisco Foundation, and a number of banks that have grant programs. (We need to raise \$310,000 within a year. If you’re interested in making a donation, please see the end of the article for contact details.)

BHNC and its Housing Services Affiliate have nearly 30 years of experience developing and managing affordable housing and the Excelsior Teen Center provides a haven for the youth of the community to better their lives through empowerment programs and educational opportunities. Although the ETC has an established presence at this particular lo-

cation since it moved there in 2002, the BHNC’s youth programs have been in the Excelsior for over 15 years.

The ETC is a unique place for teens with a full calendar every month, and hosts an ongoing Tutoring Program where students have homework help, access to computers and the internet, as well as general subject tutoring. Weekly groups include Boiz Group, Youth Employment Services program (YES), and Leadership Group: the Boiz Group focuses on personal self reflection, defining manhood, and paving the way to being strong positive men. The YES program offers a wide variety of employment services ranging from job search techniques to actual placement. The Leadership Group teaches positive choices that can eventually affect the future of the teens through accountability, integrity and responsibility.

The ETC also features summer programming including weekly workshops and field trips with the Mission YMCA hosting weekly tutoring and music classes as well. On Fridays, “Friday Night Live” provides evening programming from 5-9pm where the youth can come to the center and join in fun activities.

This programming improves the lives of the youth and impacts the community in a great way. With the purchase of the facility, the longevity of such important programming is ensured for the development of youth in the generations to come. “We can feel comfortable coming to ETC,” said ETC attendee Quez Henderson on learning the news. “Especially now that we won’t have to move to another site.” ■

To support BHNC’s purchasing this important building, please contact Executive Director, Joseph Smooke at [jsmooke@bhnc.org](mailto:jsmooke@bhnc.org), or 206-2140, ext 157. Join us at the celebration party June 13 from 3-7 pm at the ETC.



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BHNC PROGRAMS

SENIORS

THE SENIOR COMMITTEE  
& UPCOMING PROGRAMS

By Roland Soriano

The Senior Committee, the group of dedicated clients that are the “movers and shakers” of BHNC’s Senior programs, help us shape the policies, procedures, and program enhancements of the Active Senior Program. They also take an active part in planning and implementing special events and recreational programs at the center. Recently, the Senior and Community Organizing staffs have been working together to strengthen the structure and recruit new members to the senior committee: these efforts will allow our Senior Committee to take a more active role in both running the Active Senior Program and building members’ awareness and participation around community issues. These “core seniors” of the Committee bring their energies and efforts together to advance the senior department’s programs. They’re partially responsible for the many great activities at the BHNC we’re looking forward to, including:

**The Afro Caribbean/Latin Dance Class**, open to anyone interested. Learn classic Samba, Salsa and Meringue moves and put them all together to create unique dances. Taught by Virginia O’Hanlon, classes are on Tuesdays from 1-2 pm.

**Yoga classes** are open to seniors and non-seniors on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10-10:45 am. Join Vickie on Mondays and Tuesdays or Jane on Fridays for some stress reducing fun.

Richard, our wonderful volunteer computer instructor, teaches two **computer classes** weekly in our Senior Computer lab on Mondays and Wednesdays. If you

are a senior and would like to learn how to use a computer to write letters, surf the internet and email, call 415-206-2142 to enroll. A session will last for 2 months and only cost \$10.

Sunday, June 15 is our **Summer Senior Bingo Bash**. The \$5 tickets are sold at the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center from May 7 to the day of the event. The \$5 ticket includes 4 bingo cards and a hot dog lunch. There will be 5 games played in the morning and 5 games after lunch. All proceeds support the recreation program at BHNC’s Senior Center.

A valuable service to our clients includes **monthly podiatry services** provided by Dr. Philip B. San Filippo II, D.P.M. He is scheduled to come to the BHNC on Wednesday, June 25 and July 30 from 10:30-11:30 pm. Seniors are welcome to come by and see the doctor about feet related issues, so please call Roland at 415-206-2142 to make an appointment. Dr. San Filippo takes Medicare, Medicare-MediCal, Blue Cross, Blue Shield and Secure Horizons. For seniors without insurance, he charges \$58 per session.

There are a number of community issues of great interest to the Senior Committee such as saving St. Luke’s Hospital, advocating to retain the food box program for low income seniors, and the issue of MUNI possibly eliminating the 24 Divisadero and replacing it with the 33 Stanyan (seniors have been distributing a petition against this). A place where these pressing community issues are discussed, the Senior Committee plans actions and activities that can bring about change through the efforts of local seniors. ■

*For more information, or to get on our mailing list for our Senior Good News newsletter, please call Roland at 206-2142 or email at [rsoriano@bhnc.org](mailto:rsoriano@bhnc.org).*

2008 Membership Drive Update

By Kim Alvarenga

We are currently in the heart of Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center’s annual membership drive: Some of you may have signed up when you received a phone call or a letter from us, or while we were tabling in front of Martha’s Coffee or Good Life on a Saturday morning. Maybe you decided to become a member because you talked to one of our outreach workers, or because you noticed our extremely attractive membership banners on Cortland or Mission Street.

Regardless of how you became a member, your support is core to the success of our work and we thank you for it. BHNC is a membership based organization—you guide our work by showing your support, letting us know what is important to you, and voting for our board. As a member of BHNC, you be-

come part of a member led organization that develops affordable housing throughout San Francisco, provides linguistically and culturally responsive services to our community’s most vulnerable adults, seniors, youth, and families, and develops leaders by organizing and empowering our tenants, clients, members, and allies to advocate for their needs and for the needs of the community.

As this article goes to print, we are pleased to report that we have raised over \$35,000 and are almost half way to meeting our membership goal of 1,200! If you haven’t signed up yet, you can still become a member donating online at [www.bhnc.org](http://www.bhnc.org). If you

would like more information about how to become a member, or about others ways to support our work, please contact Kimberly Alvarenga at 206-2140, or email her at [kalvarenga@bhnc.org](mailto:kalvarenga@bhnc.org). We can’t do it without you, so join today! ■

Your support is the  
core to the success  
of our work and we  
thank you for it.

.....

UNITE UNITING MEMBERS

By Jeff Lester

Tele Unite doesn’t suffer from a lack of accomplishments: Chairman of the Senior Committee, Unite has won numerous awards for his hard work on behalf of BHNC, so it should come as no surprise he stands out in the field of volunteer recruitment as well. This year alone, Unite has recruited more than fifty new members. “Tele’s a hand’s on kind of guy,” says Roland Soriano, Senior Program Coordinator, “He does it all.”

Although we recently profiled Tele in a recent issue of the New Bernal Journal, we couldn’t resist taking another opportunity to thank the man for everything he does. And if you consider all the new members he’s recruited, it’s like he’s doing even more! Thanks, Tele! ■



Let’s face it, it’s Tele’s world—we just live in it.



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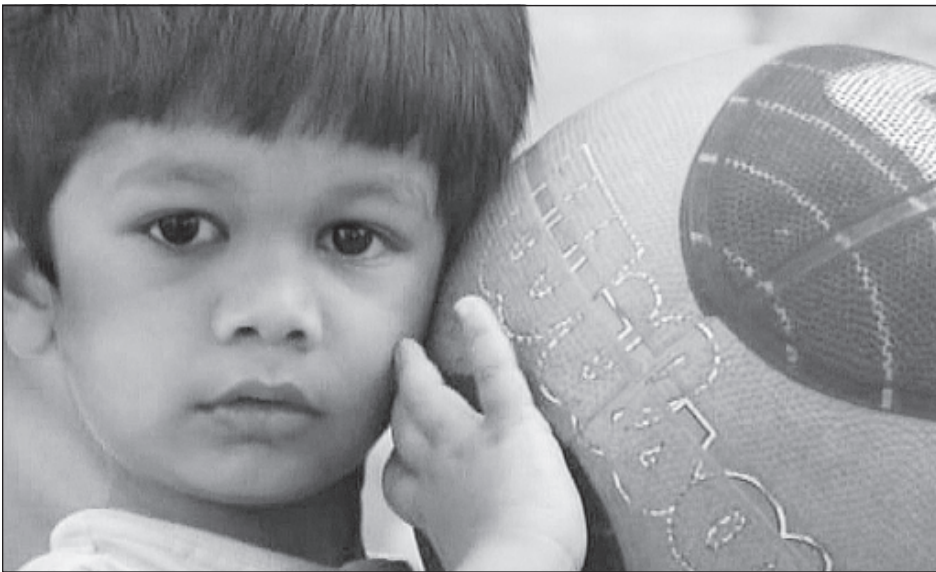


BHNC PROGRAMS

DEVELOPMENT

Is Inequality Making Us Sick?

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING TO BE HELD AT BHNC



BHNC will be hosting a partial screening of “Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?” on Wednesday June 18 at 6:00 pm, followed by a discussion with series executive producer Larry Adelman, representatives from the San Francisco Health Department, and Bernal community members.

A groundbreaking new documentary series, “Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?” crisscrosses the country to explore how the social condition in which Americans are born, live, and work, profoundly affect health and longevity, even more than medical care, behaviors and genes. This series challenges fundamental beliefs about what makes Americans healthy—or sick—and offers new remedies for an ailing society.

“Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making us Sick?” goes further, questioning what makes people ill in the first place, and probing why economic status, race and zip code are more powerful predictors of health status and life expectancy than even smoking. The documentary challenges the conventional approach to prevention, which has mostly been limited to encouraging healthy behaviors. But much of what can improve health lies outside an individual’s control: better land use, transportation and business investment; ensuring that every neighborhood has access to healthy foods; safe streets and green space; better schools and a living wage.

Join us at BHNC on June 18 at 6:00 pm for what promises to be a lively and provocative discussion. ■

HILLWIDE GARAGE SALE RETURNS!

Combination Street Fair Flea Market is Saturday, August 16

By Karen Garrison

One of the “premiere garage sale events” in San Francisco, the 15th Annual Hillwide Garage Sale will be held on **Saturday, August 16**. Hillwide is one of BHNC’s fundraisers—along with Fiesta on the Hill on October 19, and this year’s upcoming 30th Annual BHNC Birthday Bash on October 4—that attracts a variety of Bernal residents as well as many people from throughout the city and beyond: just last week a woman from Texas called to ask about the date of Hillwide as she always plans her vacation to visit her daughter around the Hillwide Garage Sale. Along with our own sale here at the BHNC, more than a hundred Bernal households registered their own individual garage sales last year. Each official site paid a registration fee to the BHNC Senior Services Department of \$24 to \$29 (BHNC Member vs. Non Member), and street sites paid \$40 in order to participate in this event. This community event captures the feeling of a mini street fair, flea market, traffic jam, and all-out grass roots community event all at once, so please join us on **August 16** to shop, donate items to the center or host your own garage sale. ■

For more information or to request an application, please contact Karen Garrison at [kgarrison@bhnc.org](mailto:kgarrison@bhnc.org)

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1. Host a Registered Garage Sale!  
Complete this form or check out our website ([www.bhnc.org](http://www.bhnc.org)), and return it to the BHNC by **Tuesday, July 15** to get on the official site map.

2. Donate usable items to the BHNC for our own sale!  
This is a tax - deductible donation to our center. Please bring items to 515 Cortland Avenue on Thursday and Friday, **August 14 and 15**

3. Shop at dozens of garage sales throughout Bernal Heights...  
Come to the center for your site map, shop at our MEGA SALE, then shop till you drop all over the hill.

4. Pass on information about the sale to **EVERYONE** you know!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

1st Cross Street: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Cross Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Day/Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I wish to participate in the Hillwide Garage Sale

House Site Registration: ☐ \$24 (2008 BHNC member) ☐ \$29 (BHNC non-member) If you enclosed the \$29 fee, do you want to be counted as a BHNC member? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Street Site Registration: ☐ \$40 Street Sites. 6 Cortland sites available on a first come/serve basis.

In addition to my registration fee, I want to donate the following proceeds of my garage sale to support BHNC’s Senior Services: ☐ 25% ☐ 50% ☐ 100% Other \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I will also have a garage sale on Sunday, August 17, 2008

By checking this box, we will designate that you will have a sale on Sunday, August 17th on the official Hillwide Garage Sale map.

Amount enclosed for registration: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card Payments are available upon request. Please make checks payable to: Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center,

Send your check and this completed registration form to: Steven Restivo Event Services, P.O. Box 151017, San Rafael, CA. 94915 [www.SRESproductions.com](http://www.SRESproductions.com) ~ 800-310-6563

Once we recieve your check and form, we will send you an acceptance letter. Than approximatley 30 days prior to the event, we will mail you your general instructions for participation.

Your participation in this Senior Department event supports the programs and services for seniors and disabled adults in Bernal Heights and the Excelsior.

NBJ

**BHNC PROGRAMS  
ORGANIZING**

**WHAT WILL BECOME OF CORTLAND & BAYSHORE?**

By Joseph Smooke

Earlier this Spring, Home Depot succeeded in securing their building permits for the Goodman's/Whole Earth site on Bayshore at the foot of Cortland, despite many long years of struggle with activists who wanted responsiveness to community concerns and for Home Depot to provide Bayview and Bernal Heights with enforceable commitments to real community benefits. All indications were that after rebuffing the substantive demands from a Citywide coalition of residents, merchants, and labor leaders led by Bayview and Bernal Heights, Home Depot would proceed to build their store anyway. Then, in April, Home Depot publicly (and unexpectedly) announced it was abandoning its development plans for the site.

This creates an amazing opportunity for creative, constructive land use planning. The owner of the site has naturally received many development offers since Home Depot pulled out, but without an opportunity to plan together for the future of this site, any development proposal will be met with intense skepticism once again from both the Bayview and Bernal Heights sides of Bayshore Boulevard. This should not happen: one thing we learned through all the discussions and hearings related to Home Depot was that nearly all Bayview and Bernal Heights residents and merchants are interested in the same community benefits. When Home Depot had control of the site, they were unwilling to change their development proposal or bind themselves to any community commitments, instead preferring to drive a wedge between our

communities. Now is our time to come together to plan and solicit development proposals responsive to our common needs and goals.

This is no idle fantasy. Supervisor Ammiano has actively paved the way for joint planning to happen, and pulled together Supervisor Sophie Maxwell, Michael Cohen (Director of the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development) and representatives for the site's

**An amazing opportunity for creative and constructive land use planning.**

owner. All have agreed to have a Community Advisory Committee that will include representatives from Bayview and Bernal Heights: Ammiano has selected Larry Cruz and myself from Bernal Heights, and Supervisor Maxwell is still selecting her representatives. We expect to start meeting during the first part of June to create a mutually agreeable development strategy for common goals that would be listed and agreed to as part of the planning process.

This is an important issue for our community on many different levels, especially to ensure the development of what has been a vacant, rotting site for years now. This site should be providing jobs and economic opportunity for so many people in our communities. Please watch the NBJ for updates as this historic planning process unfolds. ■

**NEWS FROM THE FRONT**

**Notes on the Struggle to Save St. Luke's**

By Kimberly Alvarenga

Concerned about the lack of community representation and input within Sutter CPMC's Outreach Taskforce and Blue Ribbon Panel, Members of the Coalition To Save St. Luke's met with Supervisor Tom Ammiano and Dr Mitch Katz, Director of San Francisco's Department of Public Health on Monday, May 12, to discuss the future of St. Luke's Hospital.

According to Sutter CPMC, the role of the Outreach Taskforce and Blue Ribbon Panel are to "enhance the dialogue between the community and CPMC" and "develop a viable plan for an acute care hospital at CPMC's St. Luke's Hospital." Despite the fact that the Outreach Taskforce process has been completed and that the Blue Ribbon Panel Process is two thirds complete, the future of services at St. Luke's hospital continues to remain uncertain.

Both Supervisor Ammiano and Dr. Mitch Katz were supportive of the coalitions' concerns and have committed to working with the Coalition to ensure that St. Luke's Hospital stay open as a full service community hospital providing quality healthcare to all. Regardless of CPMC's process, community members are urged to make their voices heard on this issue.

One of the greatest strengths of this community process to save St. Luke's Hospital has been the ongoing efforts of the members of the community collation to propel this process forward in a number of ways. On May 15, a diverse group of community coalition, outreach taskforce and Blue Ribbon panel members

met at BHNC to discuss specific demands regarding what services we want to see at St. Luke's. Meetings such as this are an important way for the community to stay informed of the events of the Blue Ribbon Panel as this process goes forward.

At this meeting, participants agreed that:

- the City should not approve any plans CPMC has to build a new hospital until CPMC first commits to keeping St. Luke's open as a full-service hospital
- that CPMC's Institutional Master Plan must include St. Luke's as an essential part of the CMPC network and not be treated as a separate "problem" to be solved.
- St. Luke's should be rebuilt as an attractive facility, with high-quality health services that reflect the changing needs of the community and that it include: Pediatrics; Emergency Department; Medical/Surgery; Operating Room; Intensive Care and Urgent Care units; and Mental Health Services.

As this article is going to print, the location and date for the last Blue Ribbon Panel meeting, which will provide an opportunity for community input on the future of St. Luke's Hospital, is being changed. It will be on June 3, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at a location to be determined. If you would like more information on the new date and location of the meeting, or would like to get involved in the Coalition to Save St. Luke's, please call Kimberly Alvarenga at 415-206-2140 ext. 149, or email her at [kalvarenga@bhnc.org](mailto:kalvarenga@bhnc.org). ■

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# BLUE RIBBON PANEL FACES ST. LUKE’S CHALLENGE

By Jeff Lester

The annual Community Congress held at BHNC can be a catalyzing force for activism, and nobody knows that better than St. Luke’s Blue Ribbon Panel member Bob Prentice. “When the issue about the Blue Ribbon Panel needing more time came up,” said Prentice about the May 19 Panel meeting, “the people running the process said it wasn’t a problem since there had been no publicity. I was able to quickly counter that we had an extensive discussion at our Commu-

nity Congress, and that the Neighborhood Center and CNA had publicized the meeting. I was also able to say that many people from the neighborhood wanted to come, but that holding the forum at Grace Cathedral presented a huge obstacle.”

“I proposed that a postponement might be more acceptable if they agreed that the later meeting would be either at St. Luke’s or somewhere nearby,” Prentice said. “There was quick and widespread support in the room, the Bishop said he would take responsibility for finding a more suitable place, and it was done.”

# Morales Wins Fair Housing Award

By Lauren Tyler

Jose Morales, the diligent fighter for tenant’s rights in Bernal Heights and The Mission, was awarded the Equal Fair Housing Awards from the Human Right’s Commission on Thursday April, 24 at City Hall. Morales, 78, created a wave of emotion that flooded his words throughout the ceremony commemorating his struggle to keep his affordable home of three generations. “I will not give up and I will continue fighting all the way to the end. Even to the US Supreme Court if necessary,” exclaimed Morales vigorously.

Morales has been fighting eviction for fourteen years—“ever since day one,”—when his landlord moved in to the building, said Morales, with the intention to convert an “affordable housing unit into a luxury unit.” Even in his frail state, Morales, after fourteen years, retains the verve he had for all these years of struggle, and now faces the Ellis Act for eviction, the “neutron bomb for tenants,” said Morales.

Despite the grave state Morales is in, the award marked the change that can come from struggle: the award was presented to Morales for the Mission District, and Espanola Jackson for Bay view and Hunter’s Point, both of whom are in their seventies. Morales “[carries] on this fight and yet he keeps going, he just keeps going,” said Howard Wallace of Senior

Action Network and also a friend of Morales. “It’s people like that there should be more of in the U.S.,” said Wallace.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the crowd that had filled room 416 of City Hall, uncustomary for Human Right’s Committee meetings, retired to the hallway. Morales carried the yellow daffodils Wallace had brought him. Together, all the friends from the Senior Action Network that supported Morales stood against the marble walls for pictures to embolden a moment so dear to all their struggles. Morales, elated amidst all the joviality and friendship was hard-pressed to gather the words he wanted, saying he felt “great being honored” and then adamantly reminded everyone to vote no on Proposition 98 and yes on 99.

After the ceremony, Morales pushed his red cart home to continue his daily battle. ■



Activist and HRC award winner Jose L. Morales

LAUREN TYLER

“None of this would have happened,” Prentice noted, “without the community organizing or the breakout group at the Community Congress. It was an important example of how a mobilized community can influence decision making that would otherwise be window dressing.”

The possibility that the twenty-nine member Blue Ribbon Panel, formed to help St. Luke’s owner CPMC decide the future of local hospital St. Luke’s, will end up being little more than “window dressing” is a bracing one, but one that Prentice insists must be considered and actively fought. At the second meeting of the Blue Ribbon Panel, Dr. Martin Brotman, the CEO of CPMC, presented the institutional master plan for CPMC, a blueprint for where the organization is heading over the next five years.

“The truth is,” remarked Prentice, “their business plan didn’t even take St. Luke’s into account. My greatest fear is that we go through this lengthy process and Martin Brotman says at the end, ‘we want to keep this open, we put this to the best minds of San Francisco, and we hate to say this, but we can’t keep St. Luke’s open.’”

“You see,” Prentice explained, “when CPMC bought St. Luke’s they did it to address CPMC’s own weakness in providing charity care, which is one of the requirements they have to fulfill as a non-profit. But at the same time, one of the things CPMC touts is the high level of private insurance, of profitable care, they provide. 80% of St. Luke’s is Medi-Cal patients, which isn’t private insurance, isn’t profitable care.”

“So CPMC treats St. Luke’s like they’re losing money...until it comes

time to use their balance sheets to justify their non-profit status. CPMC needs to treat St. Luke’s as part of their master plan. They need to *embrace* St. Luke’s as part of that plan.”

Prentice added emphatically, “We want to argue that if CPMC bought St. Luke’s, they need to stop talking about it as other, or as a problem they need to solve. You’ve got to own it. It’s not second class. It’s not separate. It’s an important principle that needs to be preserved and that can work to their—and everyone’s—advantage.”

“The thing that is crucial for everyone in the community to understand is, what makes CPMC’s whole institutional master plan work, is that it requires permits from the city,” Prentice pointed out. “And that’s where the city has leverage. It’s really clear to me that the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor’s office are using that leverage to tell Brotman that St. Luke’s must be part of that plan in order for the permits to be considered.”

“And that’s what you really have to know about this struggle for St. Luke’s,” concluded Prentice. “Ultimately, the decision about whether St. Luke’s stays open is a political decision. The community has to be motivated and smart and back the current political will that says that there is no way CPMC is going to get what they want without St. Luke’s being part of their plan. That’s the only way it will happen.”

“But you can’t leave it up to politicians. You have to have a well-educated group of activists working on this,” Prentice concluded. “Our job is to help the politicians stay strong, just in case things start to go sour.” ■



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# Community Leaders for the City Celebrated at Safety Awards Ceremony

By V. Cooke

The crowd erupted in applause as Leslie Burch, a young reverend from Visitation Valley, took the stage to accept an award recognizing his work to stem the violence in his neighborhood. Burch grew up in Vis Valley, and has spent most of his 39 years working with different groups in that area to decrease violence and violent crime and help people to heal from the emotional trauma that violence inflicts on entire communities. Burch is also one of fourteen community leaders from the different neighborhoods in San Francisco all recognized for their work in increasing public safety. These were the Safety Network Community Leadership Awards.

Safety Network is a partnership of 13 community organizers throughout San Francisco neighborhoods that work with residents to develop community-driven solutions to safety issues. On April 2, they held their second annual awards ceremony. Quintin Mecke, the program director stated, "We believe it's important to take the time to recognize people for the amazing work they do. This kind of community work is hard, and too often goes unappreciated."

This year the list of people recognized by Safety Network were: John Perry from Bernal Heights; Valerie Bell from the Bayview; Ginale Harris from the Mission; Sheryl Davis from the Western Addition; Rudi Corpuz from SOMA; Michael Nulty from the Tenderloin; Leslie Burch and Sharen Hewitt from Visitation Valley; Devi Joseph from the Rich-

mond; Marc Randall from the Sunset; and two groups, the Fix Masonic Coalition for Park district and the Middle Polk Neighborhood Association for Central district. The awardees included reverends, rec center directors, youth service



Darcy Lee and Safety Award winner John Perry (center)

providers, and regular community members. Their work stretched from lobbying for increased police staffing, to setting up ways for business owners to contribute to public safety projects, to coordinating improvements in youth-centered violence prevention programs.

Through the speeches of the awardees and their collective resumes, the overall message of the night was clear; the message was nicely summed up by Safety Network Organizer Dina Hillard of the Tenderloin, "Public safety is an issue for all San Franciscans, and the police and city departments can't solve the problem for us. We all have to be involved in creating the safer communities that we want to see for ourselves." ■

# JOHN PERRY WINS SAFETY NETWORK AWARD

By Jeff Lester

"I consider myself more of a foot soldier—or a loud crank, really," wrote John Perry to the Bernal safe mailing list the day after he learned he was to receive Safety Network Community Leadership Award. It's a typically humble statement from Perry: when questioned later about the origins of his activism, Perry will merely shrug and say, "I grew up in Washington D.C., and people eat politics for breakfast out there." Press him for his significant achievements in police/community relations and he'll say, "Jim Miller is amazing. The previous captain, Captain Chignell, has been amazing. Ev-

**"You can fight the causes that create crime, and yet also have zero tolerance for a person holding someone at gunpoint."**

everyone I've encountered on the police force is tremendously committed to working with the community and making it a safe and healthy place to be, and they really don't get enough credit."

A slim, handsome man, Perry speaks quietly and pensively, occasionally skirting between a laconic, almost deadpan, tone, then speaking in measured, well-sculpted sentences that reveal his background in professional writing and considerable breadth of knowledge on community affairs. The tipping point seems to be how much the topic of conversation is about him: after being complimented on his organization of the community in the wake of the recent robberies at gunpoint—an organization that involved writing a half dozen detailed emails and

uploading detailed community policing reports—Perry will simply say, "I'm pretty reactive with this stuff." If asked about his life in San Francisco before moving to Bernal Heights, Perry may not offer more than, "I spent six months with a friend in Laurel Heights, and felt like I moved here with the East Coast on my back."

But ask Perry about the recent spate of gun-related robberies, and he'll casually pepper a well-informed discussion with stories about gun shop restriction in San Francisco, tales of the shops grandfathered in under the law, pointed questions about public awareness spots and political opinion, before even moving to what he considers the crux of the subject: "I do think we have to embrace that fact that you can fight the causes that create crime and push for the empowerment of individuals raised under those causes, and yet also have zero tolerance for a person holding someone at gunpoint."

"And I think we need to embrace and help define the idea of community policing," Perry adds, "So that we have a police department that shares a mutual respect for the people they're safeguarding."

In fact, the more one talks to Perry the more one sees his activism stemming not just from his past in D.C., but his present and enduring love for Bernal Heights. "I live on Wool, along the two block strip of Wool and it really is a microcosm of Bernal Heights: we have people of just about every type you can imagine on our two block stretch: seniors; new families; gay couples; a person of transgender; people of different cultures, races. And we have a block party every year, and it's terrific."

"People of all kinds of needs can continue to live here in Bernal Heights," Perry notes, "and my family and I are aware we can never move. We can never replicate this. I mean, we're a family of four with two dogs—we're really fortunate to live here."

"I really love Bernal Heights," Perry concludes. "When we first came here, I instantly knew we were home." ■

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# BHNC Celebrates Volunteers

## TAPROOT VOLUNTEERS HONORED

By Janine Hudak

Thanks so much to our volunteers who attended this year’s appreciation party. A large turnout of attendees made the inspiring evening that much more fun!

Guests enjoyed a delicious meal catered by local restaurant, Jasmine Tea House, and entertainment provided by both the crowd-pleasing Bernal Tappers dance group and the talented Govea-Peña Family. With the date and theme of the party aptly chosen as Earth Day, recycled materials were used as place settings and decorations. Seniors at BHNC decorated recyclable pots and planted herbs to use as centerpieces and give away as party favors.

During the program, BHNC Execu-

tive Director, Joseph Smooke, welcomed the guests and thanked them their achievements this past year. Further words of thanks were given by Karen Garrison, Director of Senior Services, and Kimberly Alvarenga, Director of Community Organizing.

At this year’s awards ceremony, BHNC honored the Taproot Foundation and Taproot Volunteers, who make Service Grants—grants of high-quality, professional consulting services. Each Service Grant is executed by a team of professionals who volunteer their time and expertise to help the community. Recently, the Taproot Foundation awarded a Service Grant to BHNC to create a state of the art, customized, web-based

database that will greatly enhance our ability to manage a myriad of projects, fundraising, and communication with our funders and community members.

Headed by Taproot Account Director, Marguerite Wilbur, and Project Manager Michael Granath: Forum Desai, Nitin Hande, Giorgio Porro, and Mathew Richen provided the technical expertise and spent countless hours creating the new database and conferencing with staff to make it as encompassing and as efficient as possible.

Mr. Smooke presented the group with certificates of appreciation. “There’s no way we can do all we do for the community without volunteers,” Smooke said, “and this year we honor the most extraordinary team of skilled volunteers who have worked with us for months, evenings and weekends, behind the scenes

to improve our technology. The Taproot team’s work will benefit BHNC for many years to come!”

On behalf of the team, Ms. Wilbur and Mr. Porro accepted the awards, with Ms. Wilbur adding, “We greatly appreciate the work BHNC does for the Bernal Heights community and are delighted to have created a powerful database that will support BHNC’s programs now and in the future.”

Our organization is grateful to Taproot, Taproot Volunteers, Senior Services Volunteers, our Board and Advisory Committee members, as well as *all* of our agency volunteers. An integral part of the organization, our volunteers provide crucial services to the community and it would be impossible to function without them. It was a pleasure to spend the evening celebrating their contributions. ■

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# New Bernal Journal en Español

## COVER STORY

### Congreso Comunitario

continua de página 1

#### Creando Comunidades Más Seguras

Residentes de Bernal y miembros del Departamento de Policías de San Francisco hablaron sobre como expandir las iniciativas de la comunidad para resolver problemas de crimen y seguridad. Se pusieron de acuerdo sobre ciertas prioridades, incluyendo la organización de asociaciones para cada cuadra de Bernal, y reuniones mensuales en BHNC para discutir temas de seguridad y para que los oficiales publicos puedan rendir cuentas a la comunidad. Los participantes estaban emocionados con las victorias del trabajo de seguridad y tienen ganas de continuar empujando para crear una comunidad segura para todos en Bernal Heights. La próxima reunion tendrá lugar en BHNC el próximo 19 de junio a las 18 horas.

Para más información, o para involucrarse, por favor contacte a V Cooke al 415 206-2104 x 152 o [vcooke@bhnc.org](mailto:vcooke@bhnc.org).

#### Desarrollos en Alemany

Residentes de Alemany y sus vecinos del sur de Bernal se reunieron para explorar nuevas oportunidades para desarrollar Alemany y sus posibles impactos sobre la comunidad. La Alianza de Acción del Sur de Bernal esta preocupada sobre la posible construcción de casas en la loma arriba de Alemany, porque aislaria aun más a Alemany del resto de Bernal. Las posibilidades de la reconstrucción de Alemany también fueron discutidas. Residentes y vecinos sugirieron como reconstruir Alemany, incluyendo la in-

**En un Sábado y cinco grupos de discusión, más de cien participantes dan forma al trabajo de BHNC durante el próximo año. Así es como lo hacen.**

tegración de la plaza St. Mary's, y la importancia de involucrar a los residents durante todo el proceso.

Para más información, o para involucrarse, por favor contacte a Kimberly Alvarenga al 415 206-2104 x 149 o [kalvarenga@bhnc.org](mailto:kalvarenga@bhnc.org).

#### Salvando al Hospital St. Luke's

El grupo más grande discutió la campaña para salvar a St. Luke's. El director de la Oficina del Alcalde de Servicios Vecindarios, Mike Farrah, identificó la lucha para impedir que CPMC cierre el hospital como "el trabajo más imporante pasando en San Francisco." La sesión incluyo una discusión animada sobre los últimos acontecimientos en la campaña, como la coalición que esta trabajando con miembros del grupo de trabajo Cinta Azul para preservar el centro de cuidado de urgencia y los servicios basados en la comunidad en este importante hospital.

Para más información, o para involucrarse, por favor contacte a Kimberly Alvarenga al 415 206-2104 x 149 o [kalvarenga@bhnc.org](mailto:kalvarenga@bhnc.org)



Alfredo Pedroza, Zachary Tuller, Captain Denis O'Leary, Assemblyman Mark Leno responden a las preocupaciones de la comunidad

#### Temas de Viviendas en San Francisco

Eric Quezada y Kevin Kitchingham facilitaron una discusión sobre temas de viviendas y nuevas proposiciones legales. Proposicion 98 y 99 estan incluidas en las elecciones del próximo 3 de junio, las dos son sobre dominio eminente, pero el grupo estuvo de acuerdo con que la proposición 98 afectaria negativamente a la ciudad porque debilitaria el control de alquileres y eliminaria reglamentos de zonificación. La proposición 99 ofrece una verdadera reforma de dominio eminente sin amenazar esas importantes protecciones. Proposiciones locales F & G tratan al tema del desarrollo de Candlestick y Hunters Point. A Proposicion G le falta la obligación de que los cambios ocurran, mientras que Proposición F requiere que 50% de las nuevas unidades sean designadas como vivienda para personas con bajos ingresos. El grupo también exploró el Fondo de Vivienda de San Francisco, una propuesta para crear una fuente de financiamiento sostenible a largo plazo para el desarrollo de Viviendas para personas con bajos incresos en San Francisco.

Para más información, o para involucrarse, por favor contacte a Kimberly Alvarenga al 415 206-2104 x 149 o [kalvarenga@bhnc.org](mailto:kalvarenga@bhnc.org)

#### Consejo de Jóvenes

BHNC también involucro a los Jóvenes y hablaron de la importancia de la voz de los jóvenes y la posibilidad de hacerse oír a través de un Consejo de Jóvenes del Centro Vecindario. Le hicieron varias preguntas al grupo: Es importante tener una voz? Que esperarían de un Consejo de Jóvenes? Cómo lo llamarían? Los jóvenes hablaron sobre los miedos y ansiedades de hablar en público y hacerse oír, pero reconocieron que el cambio requiere que se involucren en el trabajo. El nombre que eligieron para el Consejo es el *Movimento para empoderar a Jóvenes*. El grupo estaba emocionado sobre

la posibilidad de tener un consejo para trabajar sobre temas importantes y ser una fuerza de cambio.

Para más información, o para involucrarse, por favor contacte a Frederique Clermont al 415 206-2104 x 169 o [fcclermont@bhnc.org](mailto:fcclermont@bhnc.org)

También tomamos la oportunidad para reconocer a los ganadores del *Bernard Education Award*. El premio de hasta \$1,000, para usar en educación terciaria para jóvenes que participan en programas de BHNC, es posible gracias a una dotación creada por uno de los miembros de nuestra junta directiva. Hubieron 3 ganadores, Jaleace Smith, Willy Wang y Chanel Moody. Refiriéndose al premio, Jaleace Smith dijo que "este premio me ayuda a estar un paso más cerca de mis objetivos educacionales."

El congreso finalizó con el anuncio de los ganadores de las elecciones para la junta directiva de BHNC. Los miembros electos fueron Kristin Nelson, Amy Beinart y Larry Cruz.

BHNC presentó su reporte anual con su nuevo plan estratégico. Este plan ofrece una clara teoría de cambio, mostrando como el centro utiliza sus programas y actividades para construir liderazgo a largo plazo en la comunidad, y a la misma vez mostrando los vínculos entre la relación principal del Centro con Bernal Heights, la profundidad de su trabajo en Excelsior y sus viviendas en toda la ciudad. El plan estratégo es más que un simple mapa de cinco años, es un resumen de sus raíces históricas, una declaración de intención y un resumen conciso de la vision de BHNC. Queremos agradecer a Margi Clarke y Emily Goldfarb por su orientación como asesoras en el plan estratégico durante los últimos dos años, y a nuestra diseñadora gráfica Edi Berton por hacer que el texto sea tan facil de leer! Para más información, o para recibir una copia del plan estratégico por farvor contacte a Joseph Smooke al 206 2140 x 157 o [jsmooke@bhnc.org](mailto:jsmooke@bhnc.org), or venga a BHNC. ■



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# Notas sobre la Lucha para salvar a St. Luke's

Por Kimberly Alvarenga

Preocupados por la falta de representación de la comunidad dentro del grupo de trabajo y panel de Cinta Azul de Sutter CPMC, miembros de la coalición para Salvar a St. Luke's se reunieron con el supervisor Tom Ammiano y el docton Mitch Katz, Director del Departamento de Salud Pública de San Francisco el Lunes 12 de mayo para discutir el futuro del Hospital St. Luke's.

Según Sutter CPMC el rol del grupo de trabajo y panel de Cinta Azul es “aumentar el diálogo entre la comunidad y CPMC” y “desarrollar un plan viable para un centro de cuidado de urgencia en el hospital St. Luke’s de CPMC.” A pesar de que el proceso del grupo de trabajo no ha sido completado y que dos tercios del process del panel Cinta Azul ha sido completado, el futuro de los servicios de St. Luke’s continua incierto.

El Supervisor Ammiano y el Dr. Mitch Katz mostraron su apoyo y se han cometido a seguir trabajando con la coalición para asegurar que el hospital permanezca abierto como un hospital comunitario con todos los servicios necesarios para proveer asistencia sanitaria de calidad para todos. Sin importar el proceso de CPMC, miembros comunitarios deben hacerse oír en este tema.

Una de las fuerzas más importantes de este proceso comunitario para salvar a St. Luke's ha sido los esfuerzos incesantes de los miembros de la coalición comunitaria para hacer que el proceso continúe. El 15 de mayo, un grupo diverso de la coalición, el grupo de trabajo y el panel Cinta Azul se re-

unieron en BHNC para discutir demandas específicas sobre que servicios quieren ver en St. Luke's. Reuniones como esta son unaherramienta importante para que la comunidad se mantenga informada sobre los eventos en el panel Cinta Azul mientras el proceso continua.

En esta reunión los participantes estuvieron de acuerdo en que:

- La ciudad no debe aprobar ningún plan para que CPMC construya un nuevo hospital hasta que CPMC no se comprometa a mantener a St. Luke's abierto como un hospital con todos los servicios necesarios.
- Que el plan institucional de CPMC debe incluir a St. Luke's como una parte esencial de la red de CPMC y no debe ser tratado como un "problema" para solucionar.
- St. Luke's debe ser reconstruido como una facilidad atractiva, con servicios de calidad que reflejan las necesidades de la comunidad, y debe incluir: pediatría, emergencias, cirugía, sala de operaciones, y servicios de salud mental.

A la hora de impresión la fecha y el lugar de la última reunión del panel Cinta Azul, que proveerá una oportunidad para que la comunidad opine sobre el futuro de St. Luke's no esta decidida. Será el 3 de junio de 18:30 a 20:30, el sitio todavía no ha sido determinado. Si desea más información sobre la fecha y el lugar de esta reunión o si quiere saber como involucrarse en la coalición para salvar a St. Luke's, por favor llame a Kimberly Alvarenga al (415) 206-2140 ext. 149, o por email a [kalvarenga@bhnc.org](mailto:kalvarenga@bhnc.org). ■

## VERANO Y DIVERSIÓN EN EXCELSIOR TEEN CENTER!

Por Danyelle Caruther

Un programa para estudiantes del secundario entre las edades de 13 y 18, “Vernao y Diversión en ETC” es una gran oportunidad para mejorar las habilidades necesarias para tener éxito en el secundario y en la vida.

Estamos ofreciendo un programa de siete semanas para que jóvenes exploren temas que los ayudaran a tener experiencias positivas, a conseguir entender mejor que deben esperar durante y después del secundario, y a aprender como aplicar estas ideas a situaciones reales. Cada taller se reunirá dos veces por semana por dos horas y discutirá un tema distinto, desde habilidades de vida a vidas sanas. Al final de cada semana habrá una salida relacionada al tema de esa semana, como también salidas a parques de diversiones y museos.

Los jóvenes deben asistir a seis horas semanales y no pueden faltar a más del 15 % de los talleres (4 de los 24 talleres) para completar el programa. Comenzando el 23 de junio, el programa terminará el 11 de agosto con un camping y una graduación. Los jóvenes que completen el programa también recibirán \$100. ■

Para un programa completo, o para más información sobre como participar por favor llame al 415.334.9919 x 102 o visite el Excelsior Teen Center, en 4468 Mission Street.



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# COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

## What's Happening At The Library?

You may have noticed lots of activity around the library, like big piles of dirt and filled-up debris boxes. It's getting quite exciting. Stay tuned for future updates.



above: The future Children's Room, as it was on May 1  
below: Valerie sharing a book at storytime



### CHILDREN'S STORYTIME

Is a happening-thing at Red Hill Books. Congratulations to Valerie who joined the branch staff as our full time children's librarian. She and lots of the neighborhood kids have been having a good time every Tuesday and Thursday morning at 10 a.m. with stories, songs and fun. Stop by to say hello, give a welcome and enjoy the friendliest bookstore in town.

### NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY CAMPAIGN

Had several events last month to raise funds for the renovation; including Children's Day, Laps for Libraries, and a house-party at Peter Wiley's home. To learn more about or get involved with the Bernal Heights Library Campaign, contact Chris at: christine.leishman@friendssfpl.org or 415-626-7512, ext 101.

### BOOK CLUB

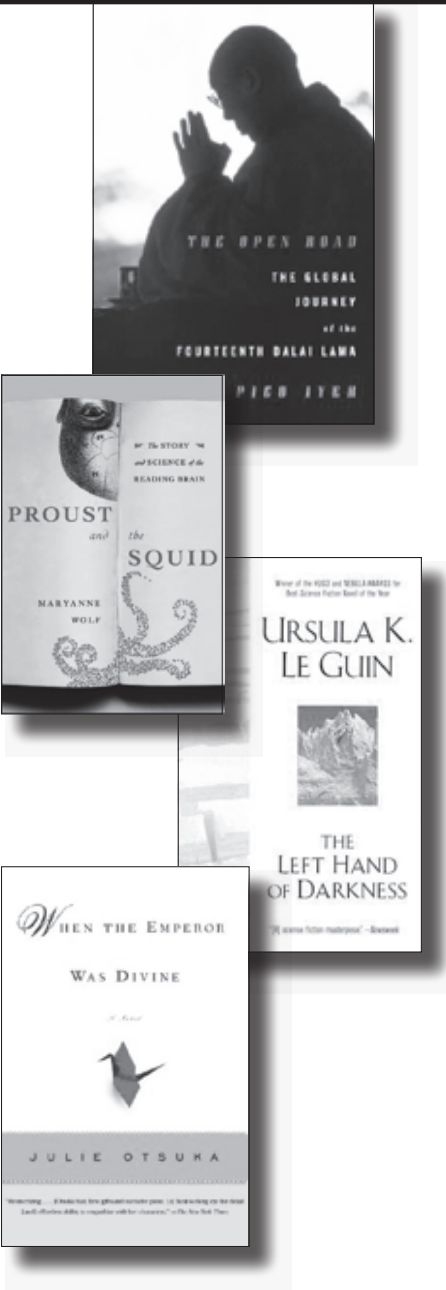
Continues to meet every month at Coleridge Park Homes and newcomers are always invited. They will meet on Thursday, June 26, 4 p.m., to discuss **When the Emperor Was Divine** by Julie Otsuka. And on Thursday, July 31, 4 p.m., to discuss **The Left Hand of Darkness** by Ursula K. Le Guin.

### SUMMER READING CLUB ON THE BOOKMOBILE

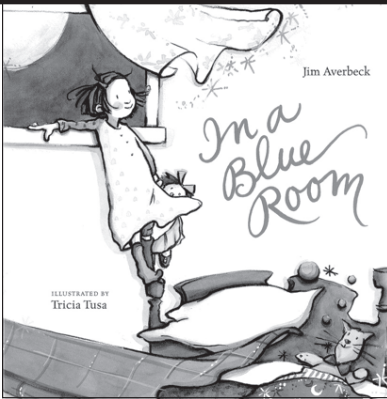
The Bookmobile continues to provide a fun, library presence at Holly Park Circle every Monday and Thursday from 2-5 p.m. Step on up into the magic bus, check out the latest movies and best sellers. And kids can READ IN THE WILDEST PLACES on the bookmobile too—sign up for the Summer Reading Club—it runs from June 14 through August 9.

### WHAT WE'RE READING

LISA recommends: **The Open Road** by Pico Iyer  
VALERIE recommends: **Proust and the Squid** by Maryanne Wolf and **The Dark Is Rising** by Susan Cooper



And don't forget to come by the Excelsior Branch (or Mission or Glen Park) to say hello, check out a book or use a computer—or give us a call if you have a reference question. You'll enjoy seeing familiar faces, as we do, and begin to find new ones as well. Happy summer reading. ■



### Book Review: IN A BLUE ROOM

Written by Jim Averbeck  
Illustrated by Tricia Tusa  
Imprint: Harcourt Children's Books  
Ages 3 to 7

Reviewed by Katixa Aboitiz

At the opening of *In a Blue Room*, we see young Alice bouncing up and down on her bed, well past her bedtime, holding her blue blanket. Blue is her favorite color, you see, and she is waiting for a blue world to help her fall asleep. Mama lovingly brings one thing after another to help Alice: first, the lilacs and lilywhites, which Alice pretends to ignore because they are not blue; then the orange tea, the red and green cozy blanket, and the lullaby bells. Alice unsuccessfully tries to fight their calming effect because they are not blue, and Alice cannot sleep in a room that is not blue! But as Alice's little eyes start to close, Mama turns off the light and....click! Everything turns blue, showing Alice and us the enchanting powers all mothers are known to have.

*In a Blue Room* is a beautiful story about a girl who—like many others—fights her bedtime with cute and imaginative excuses, and a mother who—like many others—knows exactly the right way to make a girl happy. ■

# ON SALE

...at The Good Life Grocery



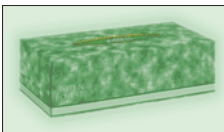
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99¢



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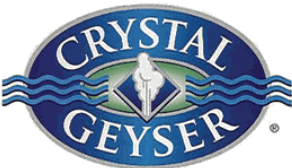


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COURTESY BERNAL HEIGHTS PRESERVATION ARCHIVE



LEGENDS OF THE HILL

BERNAL HEIGHTS HISTORY

By Terry Milne

Looking uphill at the broad expanse of newly paved Cortland Avenue in January 1925 from San Bruno Avenue (today's Bayshore Boulevard), we see, on the right, greenhouses on Bradford and Nebraska streets installed by the Galeazi family after they took over the Cortland Nursery in 1918. Although the Galeazis specialized in growing roses and gardenias until they closed the business in 1969, Bernal Heights had long been the site of commercial nurseries: both Alphonse Pottet and Maurice Pellissier had flower businesses on Cortland from the 1870s.

The east and south sides of the hill, in fact, were fertile grounds for floriculture from before the 1870s, with many enterprises located along San Bruno Road (later San Bruno Avenue, and today's Bayshore Boulevard), including one nursery operated by famous surveyor Vitus Wackenreuder. The broad expanse in the front of the photo was eventually graded for Bayshore Boulevard expansion and the later construction of James Lick Freeway 101 in the 1950s. The viewpoint location is approximately from today's long-closed Goodman Lumber Co., which mercifully will not be replaced by the contentious Home Depot development.

Bernal Rec Center Offers Scorching Summer Programs

The following are the summer programs running from June 23 to August 22 announced for Bernal Heights Recreation Center at Moultrie & Jarboe. Please contact Tom Mayfield at the Rec Center at (415) 695-5007 before the start of classes to sign up.

Tiny Tot Traditional

Monday & Wednesday 10am - 11:30am  
Designed to get pre-school age youth (3-5yr olds), pre-school and kindergarten ready, this program encourages socialization, listening skills, attention to direction and play. Pre-registration required at sfreconline.org; cost: \$30

Kids Gym

Tuesday & Thursday 10am - 11:30am  
This program is designed to promote motor skill development for toddler age youth (1-2.11mo). Pre-registration required at sfreconline.org; cost: \$30

Adult Shape-Up Walking Class

Monday-Wednesday-Thursday 1:30pm- 3pm  
This program meets at Bernal Heights Recreation Center and walks through the Bernal community addressing the needs of Adult health by providing a self paced walking class with the intention of providing a program that promotes healthy living. Cost: free.

Jr. Giants Baseball

Monday & Wednesday 3pm - 5pm  
Baseball fundamental training program for youth age 12 and under. Young athletes will learn basic fundamentals of baseball such as throwing, catching, hitting, base running and team play. Cost: free.

Adult Barbecue/Cooking Class

Monday 6:30pm - 7:45pm  
Come and experience the joy of healthy cooking, barbecue style! Each Monday participants will learn a new recipe that can be adapted to the stove or the barbecue. Cost: free.

Healthy Cooking Class

Tuesday & Friday 1pm - 3pm  
A program for youth 14 and under, each junior chef will come and learn the basic beginnings to healthy cooking, and leave with a few good recipes to share with the family.

Adult Game Night

Tuesday 6pm - 8pm  
A chance for adults to come and play old fashioned games: leave the computer at home and remember what it was like pre-technology days with games like dominoes and whist. Cost: free.

4 on 4 Community Basketball League

Wednesday  
This program runs like a league but is conducted as a drop-in program: come and see who thinks they can still play and get a good run up and down the court! Cost: free.

Competitive Basketball Program

Tuesday & Thursday 3pm - 5pm  
Designed for youth 17 and under to play basketball at a high level of competition (AAU), this program will teach game strategies and court awareness, as well as tighten basic fundamentals. Cost: free.

Aztec Dancing

Thursday 7pm - 9pm  
Come enjoy the chance to exercise while enjoying the cultural beauty of Aztec dance.

Youth Basketball

Friday 6pm - 8pm  
Designed for youth 15 and under to learn the basic and intermediate level of play in basketball by playing games in a three on three intermural game play. ■

For more info, contact Tom Mayfield at the Rec Center at 415-695-5007

SAVE THE DATE!

*BHNC is turning 30 and we will be celebrating with a Birthday Bash on October 4 at the Rec Center!*

For sponsorship information please contact Katixa Aboitiz at (415) 206-2140 ext 148 or kaboitiz@bhnc.org



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# COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

## Bernal Heights Outdoor Cinema Calls for Entries

Local filmmakers are encouraged to submit their short films and videos for exhibition in the fifth annual Bernal Heights Outdoor Cinema series. The traditional neighborhood screenings, scheduled in nearby parks and playgrounds have become an end-of-the-summer ritual for film-loving residents. This season, the independent filmmakers showcase is scheduled for the last week of August with screenings on Thursday, August 28, at El Rio; Saturday August 30 at Red Hill Books in the afternoon; Holly Park in the evening; Sunday, August 31 in Precita Park and a special city-wide screening on Sunday, September 7 at Zeum.

Once again, a local Submissions & Selection Committee calls on established Bernal filmmakers, emerging producers, neophyte and student videographers, writers, directors, editors, and related artists—to submit their work, representative of local film-making talent that resides in the neighborhood. As in the past, the definition of “local” is expanded to include not only neighborhood artists who work or live in the boundaries of Bernal Heights but also films and videos whose themes touch the unique sentiments and spirit of Bernal. Submissions are being accepted from now through July 15, 2008. To find out specific submission requirements, visit: [www.bhoutdoorcine.org](http://www.bhoutdoorcine.org) or e-mail: [info@bhoutdoorcine.org](mailto:info@bhoutdoorcine.org). ■

## ‘NO ON 98’ RALLY



Emily Goldfarb leading cheers



BHNC Board Member Eric Quezada addressing the crowd

On May 21, 2008, BHNC, Community Housing Partnership, and Chinatown Community Development Center joined together to urge California to vote no on 98 and yes on 99 in the election on May 3. Proposition 98 went on to fail, and 99 to succeed, saving both rent control and the environmental protections our communities need. ■

## CHILDREN’S DAY FESTIVAL: MAY 4, 2008



Frederique Clermont and BHNC youth do outreach as attendees donate healthy snacks to BHNC for its youth programs.



Strollers congregate at this second annual event at the Rec Center.



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THE REAL DEAL:  
NOTES FROM CORTLAND

By Darcy Lee

“Friendship is the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words.” —George Eliot

**Safety** is such an important ingredient in our daily lives. I remember when I moved here from New York 19 years ago the thing I noticed most was that I drove everywhere instead of walking and that I stopped looking over my shoulder constantly. Now I am trying to drive less and

Ways to feel safe  
(and also, hopefully,  
save the basil)

look over my shoulder more.

Bernal Heights offers a feeling of safety in many ways that other neighborhoods do not. Thus, I think the indignation regarding the muggings of the last few weeks has been a force that will eventually move us forward. Thanks to those of you who wrote Chief Fong and Captain O’Leary and asked them to come to an impromptu safety meeting at the BHNC. Thanks to them and a plethora of decorated informed and uniformed officers for attending. The news was not all good and yet I learned a lot and felt there was something I could do. If you are interested in this topic join the Bernal safe yahoo group. There are hearty differences of opinion and good community spirit.

Try and unite your own block and

SAVING OUR FAMILIES RALLY



German Yambao (center), surrounded by BHNC staff



JOSEPH SMOKE

BHNC former board member Bebe Castaing

On March 26, 2008, BHNC participated in this rally sponsored by Coleman Advocates urging the city not to sacrifice services to the poor for the sake of a balanced budget. We challenge the City, even though it faces state

and local budget shortfalls, to find new revenue sources and minimize the impact to those already struggling in our communities. ■

know your neighbors.

**Friends** and new horizons. Hugh Shurley, our beloved neighbor from the Liberty Cafe has decided to move in a different direction. His funny words and delightful smile will no longer greet us at the entrance. I can picture him with his bright, white shirt swinging open the main door and inviting folks into the warmth. He is a dynamic, successful artist thus I will post notices of his art openings in the store. So long, Hugh, and thanks for adding so much to the hood. You are my dear friend.

Excitement, comfort, and **gardening**.

my faithful friend...gardening is my extremely faithful friend. It is here that I work out the angst and worry that plagues us in our lives. I haul and dig and plant and hopefully watch it grow. If anyone has any hints re basil, bring them on...I plant it and the next morning some critter or other has bitten it down to the stem. Check out the Alemany farm and volunteer there. Learn and talk up this successful exciting venture. [www.alemanyfarm.org/calendar.html](http://www.alemanyfarm.org/calendar.html)

**Sharing food.** My Fruits of the Hill cart is working. It is not always as tidy as I would like but we have given out over

1,000 pieces of fruit, herbs, bulbs, etc. We are asking please take only two to a customer and in order for this to work when you see a full fruit tree ask if you can harvest it and keep bringing in plants, veggies, fruits, herbs, etc. No objects please. I went to Alameda on mother’s day to harvest a friend’s Meyer lemon tree... now that is heaven.

So let us grow, be aware, don’t flush as often, shower less, network more. Don’t isolate and worry, talk about your problems and share your joys. Listen to music, try dancing a little each day or singing twice a day. —with caring, d

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| — \$1 Youth Membership (under 18)      | — \$5 Seniors/Low-income Membership   |
|  | \$_____ Other                         |

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E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

My employer has a matching gift program. A corporate matching form is enclosed.

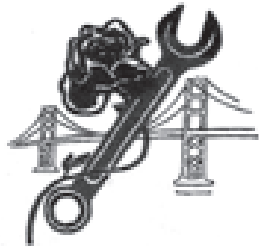
Name of employer \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ I am interested in learning about volunteer opportunities.  
☐ I am interested in learning about Planned Giving opportunities.  
☐ I have remembered the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center in my will.

Other Ways You Can Help!

- Make a United Way Donor Choice gift. Just fill in BHNC’s code #928683 on the United Way pledge form.
- For federal workers, the Combined Federal Campaign is the program through which you designate your United Way gift.
- Multiply your gift with a matching contribution from your employer.
- Donate used items to our thrift store, Gifts on the Hill, 513 Cortland
- Donate resale items to Community Thrift Store, Valencia between 17th and 18th Streets, and designate BHNC (acct# 243) as the beneficiary.
- When you shop at Cole Hardware, Mission and 29th Street, tell them you want BHNC (acct# 515) to get 10% from your purchase.
- Consider including the BHNC in your estate planning. Call (415) 206-2140 x161 to discuss how.

Return to: Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center  
515 Cortland Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94110



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SAVE THE DATES

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2008

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showcasing the work of local filmmakers

Thursday, August 28

Opening Night at

El Rio

Saturday, August 30

Red Hill Books & Holly Park

Sunday, August 31

Precita Park

Sunday, September 7

Zeum

Look for details at

www.bhoutdoorcine.org

Film submissions accepted

until July 15, 2008

# COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

## Letter from Ammiano

Bernal Heights is currently experiencing a surge in crime, as are many other areas of the city. According to the SFPD, the perpetrators of these crimes tend to come from outside of the neighborhood and often travel by car which they use to flee the scene. Many robberies have taken place on the relatively quiet streets on either side of Cortland Avenue. Captain O’Leary has taken a very pro-active approach to the problem by successfully deploying decoys to attract criminals, and stepping up vehicle and foot patrols.

Unfortunately, there is no silver bullet solution that will end crime in our community overnight. The socio-economic problems faced by certain city residents defy any quick fix. My office works to ensure the police have the resources they need, but for the long-term we work to ensure the root causes are addressed legislatively as much as possible. I have taken the lead on reforming the City’s workforce development; health care policy; affordable housing; the support of our City’s public schools with Prop H and the Rainy Day Fund; the funding of community-based violence prevention programs like the Community Response Network and HOMEY; and I’ve supported capacity building in marginalized corners of my district like Alemany. I am a big believer that a young person with decent housing and health care, a good education and access to counseling, job prospects, and with a healthy amount of self-respect is unlikely to get involved in criminal enterprises.

In the short term, however, the police need your help: there is no greater tool to fight crime than a heightened vigilance

on the part of neighbors. Please report any and all suspicious activity to the Ingleside Station at 553-0123. For more information on how you can help make your community a safer place, please call the Safety network at 678-8449.

I am hearing from constituents who are concerned the 67 and 24 lines are being cut or changed as a result of the Transit Effectiveness Project (TEP). The TEP is a process the MTA has undertaken to improve our Muni system after a comprehensive study of ridership during peak and non peak hours on all routes to determine what improvements need to be made.

I recently attended a TEP neighborhood meeting to hear the input of neighbors on needed changes, and that’s exactly what’s needed right now: while the TEP has made recommendations based on their studies, these are *not* decisions. They need Muni riders to contact them with feedback on the proposed changes to ensure they meet the needs of the community. The proposed changes to the 24 line could reroute to 24th Street and the 33 would then serve Cortland. This would mean buses coming every 15 minutes instead of 10 minutes. The proposed 67 would no longer run on Mission Street due to the many lines servicing the Mission. I know reaching Mission Street is key for many Bernal residents and increased wait times will be cause for concern. The MTA needs to hear from you about these proposed changes. You can look at the routes and find out more at [www.sftep.com/docs.html](http://www.sftep.com/docs.html) where they provide a District 9 map. You can also submit your comments by emailing [tep@sfmta.com](mailto:tep@sfmta.com). Please cc me at [tom.ammiano@sfgov.org](mailto:tom.ammiano@sfgov.org) so I am able to keep track of neighborhood input. ■

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REMEMBRANCES

CLASSIFIED ADS

Maria V. Jaquez  
(1924 - 2008)



Surrounded by her loving family, Maria passed away peacefully in her Bernal Heights home in San Francisco. She is survived by her loving husband Gonzalo; adoring children Humberto, Natalia, Miguel, Jesus, Gloria, Gonzalo Jr., and Ricardo; cherished grandchildren, David, Anna Maria, Yvette, Monique, Kyle, Michael, Nathan, Ysabel, Ryan ,and Marissa, and great grandchildren Jacob and Sophia. She is also survived by three brothers, two sisters, and countless nieces and nephews.

A member of Saint Kevin’s parish and a dedicated Head Start teacher for many years, Maria touched the lives of those around her with love and compassion. She will be missed. ■

COVER STORY

Community Congress

continued from page 1

the fight the stop CPMC from closing St Luke’s Hospital as “the most important work happening in San Francisco.” The breakout session included a lively discussion about the latest events about St. Luke’s, such as the community coalition that is working closely with a few members of the Blue Ribbon Taskforce to preserve acute care and community based services at this important community hospital.

For more information or to get involved, please contact Kim Alvarenga at 415 206-2140 x 149 or kalvarenga@bhnc.org.

Housing issues in San Francisco

Eric Quezada and Kevin Kitchingham facilitated a discussion on housing issues and upcoming legislation. Prop 98 and 99 on the June 3 ballot are both about eminent domain, but the group agreed that Prop 98 would adversely impact the city



Mother and child foment change at the 2008 Community Congress.

because it weakens rent control and eliminates zoning regulations. Prop 99 offers real eminent domain reform without threatening those important protections. Local Propositions F & G address the issue of redevelopment of Candlestick and Hunters Point. Prop G lacks enforceability, whereas Prop F requires that there be a binding agreement for the developer to create 50% of the newly constructed units as affordable. The group also explored the San Francisco Housing Fund. This is a proposed set aside to create a sustainable source of funding for affordable housing development in San Francisco.

For more information or to get involved, please contact Kim Alvarenga at 415 206-2140 x 149 or kalvarenga@bhnc.org.

Youth Council

BHNC also engaged the youth about having a voice and channeling it through a youth council at the Neighborhood Center. Several questions were asked of the group: Is it important to have a voice? What would one want out of a youth council experience? What would you call it? The youth talked about being scared and anxious about standing up to be heard, but understood that change requires getting involved in issues. The name the youth chose for BHNC’s youth council was the *Youth Empowerment Movement*. The group was excited about having a council to spearhead causes and to be a force for change.

For more information or to get involved, please contact Frederique Clermont at 415 206-2140 x169 or fclermont@bhnc.org.

In addition to the break-out groups at Congress, we also took the opportunity to recognize the winners of BHNC’s Bernard Education Award. The award comes from an endowment created by one of the members of the Board of Directors for up to \$1,000 for educational pursuits beyond high school to youth who participate in any one of BHNC’s youth programs. There were 3 winners, Jaleace Smith, Willy Wang, and Chanel Moody. In talking about the award after the event, winner Jaleace Smith told BHNC staff, “This award helps me to be one step closer to my educational goals.”

Congress ended with the announcement of winners of the elections for BHNC’s Board of Directors. The elected members were incumbents Kristin Nelson, Amy Beinart, and Larry Cruz.

Released at congress this year was a published edition of BHNC’s strategic plan. This plan offers a clear theory of change, showing how the Center utilizes its programs and activities to build long-term leadership in the community, while also articulating the ties between the Center’s central relationship with Bernal Heights, the depth of its work in the Excelsior, and its citywide housing sites. More than just a five year map, BHNC’s strategic plan is a survey of its historical roots, a statement of intent, and a concise summary of the Center’s vision. We would like to thank Margi Clarke and Emily Goldfarb for their guidance as consultants on the strategic pan process over the past two years, and designer Edi Berton for making so much text so readable! For more information or to get a copy of the Strategic Plan, please contact Joseph Smooke at 415-206-2140x157 or jsmooke@bhnc.org, or drop by the Center. ■

Ads cost 30¢ a word. Deadline for next issue is May 15, 2008.  
To place a listing in this section, please contact Katixa Aboitiz at 206-2140 ext. 148 or kaboitiz@bhnc.org

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